



# Adoption & Adoption Subsidy

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## Purpose

When courts terminate parental rights, the DHS attempts to find permanent adoptive families for children who have been abused or neglected. Most of these children qualify for adoption subsidies that help families meet their special needs. To prevent long stays in foster homes, the department's goal is to find an adoptive home as quickly as possible. At any point in time, there are usually at least 125 children waiting for an adoptive home. For information on adopting a child, including pictures of children awaiting adoption, call Iowa KidsNet at 1-800-243-0756 or [www.iowakidsnet.com](http://www.iowakidsnet.com)

## Who

As of July 1, 2008, the adoptive parents of 8,090 children were receiving subsidies. Subsidies are available if:

- The child has a special need (including physical, mental or emotional disability), is older, or is a member of a sibling group of three or more children; and
- The state is unable to place the child for adoption without the subsidy.

Here is a profile of children receiving an adoption subsidy.

Age		Race/Ethnicity	
0 - 5	16%	Caucasian	68%
6 - 11	40%	African American	20%
12 - 15	26%	Hispanic/Latino	8%
Over 16	18%	Native American	3%
		Asian	1%

## What

- The department recruits and trains prospective foster and adoptive adults.
- The department provides a subsidy until the child reaches age 18, or until age 21 if there is a disability. The DHS and families negotiate a subsidy based on needs of the child, with the upper limit being the rate that would have been paid to foster parents if the child was not adopted. Federal law prohibits a means test when determining subsidies. More than 90 percent of adoptions arranged by DHS involve a subsidy. Subsidies depend on age and other variables. Minimum rate, \$16.36 a day.
- The department provides Medicaid health insurance to adopted children receiving subsidies.

## How are We Doing?

- About 1,000 children are placed in adoption every year (see chart).
- Adoption performance is measured on timeliness, not overall numbers. Timeliness is measured from the day of removal to the day of adoption. Most removed children are reunited, but when Iowa courts terminate parental rights, states must quickly find a permanent home. The national standard is to find an adoptive home for 27percent of these children within two years of removal. Iowa's performance is 50 percent within two years.
- Iowa regularly and publicly tracks progress in this and other child welfare areas. See <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/digitaldashboard/>

SFY	Total Adoptions
2005	968
2006	977
2007	1,050
2008	1,055